

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
MARCH 1998**

**HNC REVISION: 10 JULY 1998
TAG REVIEW DATE: 29 JULY 1998**

1. **SITE NAME:** Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area
SITE NUMBER: C03MD034600

LOCATION:
City: Thurmont
County: Frederick, Washington
State: Maryland

PROJECT NUMBER: C03MD034602

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 2

ASR RAC: 3

TAG RAC: 3

2. **POC'S:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area (CRDA) consisted of 5,680.94 acres, **5,380.94** of which are now DERP FUDS eligible, located 3 miles northwest of Thurmont, Maryland in Frederick and Washington counties at latitude 39° 40'00" N and longitude 77°31'00" W. The site

measures 5 miles from east to west and 2½ miles from north to south. The Department of Interior (DOI) owns 5,371.94 acres of the site which is part of what is currently known as the Catoctin Mountain Park. The State of Maryland owns a 9-acre parcel which is part of the Cunningham Falls Park. The 300 acres ineligible under the DERP-FUDS Program is used by the Department of the Navy under a special permit from DOI. The Presidential Retreat, Camp David, is located on the Navy land.

The ranges associated with the site in WW II no longer exist because they have been dedudded, removed or allowed to return to nature. The local topography is characterized by many high hills and valleys. Elevation ranges from 660 feet to 1860 feet above sea level. Topsoil is mostly rocky. Low grass and hardwood trees predominate. **An important consideration is that greenstone was encountered in all areas of the site; it saturates a metal detector's reading, which renders the instrument useless for locating metallic objects beneath the surface.** A map at figure 3 of the ASR shows locations of ponds and streams within the site boundary. The site is well drained.

Climate is continental with movement of weather patterns from the west and the north. Because of the inland location of the site, winters are colder and summers are cooler than what is found on the Atlantic coastal areas. Average annual precipitation is 48.7 inches. July is normally the warmest month with an average temperature of 70° F and January is the coldest with 27° F.

4. SITE HISTORY: Between 1942 and 1944, the United States War Department acquired 5,680.94 acres from DOI and various landowners through purchase and condemnation for the establishment of Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area, a military reservation. Between 1942 and 1943, 274.75 acres were acquired from various landowners through purchase and condemnation. DOI conveyed an additional 4,357.4 acres (including 28 acres previously acquired in fee in 1942) to the War Department by Special Use Permit dated 16 May 1942 effective 25 March 1942. Two separate leases for 5 acres and 15 acres were acquired by the War Department from the Church of the Brethren on 23 April 1942. By Special Use Permit dated 31 May 1944, the DOI conveyed 1,401.79 acres (including 345 acres originally acquired under the initial use permit) to the War Department.

The acquisitions included four campgrounds and necessary training land for the security force. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) from nearby Fort Ritchie used several sites within the CRDA. The DOD improved many of the facilities and added new small-arms ranges at three of the campgrounds. A special

combination rifle, grenade, mortar and demolition range was constructed for the OSS. A house north of the Presidential retreat, known as the Bessie Darling House or Mt. Lent, was used to house British sailors during World War II while their vessels were being overhauled.

During DOD occupancy, these areas were used for a number of purposes including training exercises, troop housing, war dog training, and for rehabilitation of troops returning from the war. The majority of the 5,680.94 acres were not used during DOD occupancy.

Following the cessation of hostilities at the end of World War II and into 1953, the training areas and three of the four camps were declared as surplus and returned to the DOI. According to the usage permits, the DOD removed the ranges and restored structures to the satisfaction of the Park Superintendent. One camp, consisting of 300 acres, was retained by the DOD and has been in continuous use as a presidential retreat. A portion of the site containing 5,380.94 acres (274.75 acres fee, 5086.19 acres permit and 20.00 acres lease) has been determined to be DERP-FUDS eligible.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

AREA A

Size, Acres:	70
Former Use:	Guard barracks/rifle range
Present Use:	Camp grounds
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

AREA B

Size, Acres:	41
Former Use:	Guard barracks/rifle range
Present Use:	Camp grounds
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

AREA C

Size, Acres:	130
Former Use:	Troop billets/rifle range
Present Use:	Park administration offices and campgrounds
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

AREA D

Size, Acres:	25
Former Use:	Demo/firing range
Present Use:	Park
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	Potential
Type:	Grenade; mortar, rocket and small arms ammunition

AREA E

Size, Acres:	3
Former Use:	Retreat house
Present Use:	Park
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

AREA F

Size, Acres:	77
Former Use:	Military Training Area
Present Use:	Park
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

AREA G

Size, Acres:	9
Former Use:	Military Training Area
Present Use:	Park
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

AREA H

Size, Acres:	5,025.94
Former Use:	Military Training Area
Present Use:	Park
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not applicable

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** The draft Archives Search Report for Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in March 1998.

7. **STRATEGY:** **AREA A, B, C, E, F, G, H:** RAC 5;NOFA
AREA D: RAC 3;EE/CA

8. **ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met and discussed this ASR on 29 July 1998 and based on the ASR Conclusions and Recommendations, and the USAESCH Safety Comments, decided on a strategy of **EE/CA for Area D, 25 acres,** and **NOFA for all other areas: Areas A, B, C, E, F, G and H, including the remainder of the site acreage.**

HNC Safety Comments: Concurs with a site strategy of EE/CA for Area D. However, he recommended the TAG review the ASR recommended strategy of EE/CA for Area F, considering that the area: (1) Is accessible only by passing through Camp David. (2) Is controlled by the Secret Service. (3) Has only a slight potential for OE. (4) Has values for ordnance which are not very high. **Note: The ASR writer stated that he was only able to gain access to Area F because he was still on a roster with the Secret Service from his Army days. He stated that conduct of an EE/CA at Area F would be difficult, if not impossible at this time. These institutional controls effectively shield the public from potential OE hazards and the TAG concurred in a strategy of no further action for Area F. An updated RAC form with a score of 3 for the one area of concern at the site, Area D, is attached.**

Area D (Demo/firing Range--25 acres): Area D has a potential for OE based on a past history of being a 15 acre range for mortar ammunition, rockets, grenades and demolition charges. An adjacent 10 acres, the site of a destroyed house, was included in this area for a total of 25 acres. The Site Inspection (SI) team found some .30 caliber cartridge cases on a hillside west of the house. No other evidence of OE was found. There is no evidence that anyone has found OE in this area. The demo range is now the location of a large pine tree grove planted in 1957 by a youth group. This area can be reached by foot. **The ASR, while recommending EE/CA for Area D, states that NOFA is advisable until a need arises for further excavation or construction, which will probably not occur since the location is a wilderness park. (The TAG decided on a strategy of EE/CA for this area; the updated RAC does not include a value for demolition materials as it was determined that these items would have been expended at the time of use.)**

Area F (Military Training Area--77 acres): The SI team found web belt clips, empty M-1 clips, rusty booby-trap simulator springs, and debris from riot control and smoke grenades, all of which were expended and without any OE hazard. This area is adjacent to Camp David, is under continual surveillance by security, and is not readily accessible to the public. The security force has an active firing range 1000 feet from this area. **The TAG decided on a strategy of NOFA for Area F because there is little**

possibility of finding any intact OE of the sort for which debris was found and the area is not accessible to the public due to the proximity of the presidential retreat, Camp David.

Other Site Areas: Results of historical research, interviews and the site inspection revealed that there is no potential for OE in **Areas A, B, C, E, G, and H**. These areas included four camps with barracks, associated small arms ranges which are no longer extant, the supposed site of an observation post, a retreat house, and the remainder of the lands. The majority of the site was used by Fort Richie OSS recruits for training in evasion, mountaineering, and assaults, activities which would not have resulted in an OE hazard.

Clearances: The target pits, log obstacle course, a 500-foot pistol/rifle range, and the demolition area were graded and restored to the satisfaction of the Park Superintendent. Two letters, one from the Army Service Forces on 11 October 1945 and the second from the Bomb and Shell Disposal Team on March 1946, declared the area as decontaminated. **The March letter stated that a visual and mine detector search of the area was conducted and that the land was safe for use as a public recreational area.**

CWM: The ASR does not address presence of CWM at the site.

Other Projects: (1) Landfills 1 and 2, identified in the INPR, are addressed in HTRW project C03MD034601. (2) Landfill 3 is a current Navy HTRW project.

Geology Concern: The local geology has a Metabasalt-Catoctin base known as greenstone. The Catoctin Mountain Park greenstone is a moderately reactive rock type. This rock type was encountered in project areas D, F and H. The reactive rock saturates a metal detector's reading, which renders the instrument useless for locating subsurface metallic objects. This is an important consideration if any future intrusive investigations become necessary. An impact area clearance certificate for Area D indicates that the area was cleared using mine-detection equipment, which is suspect due to the mineral content of the soil, greenstone.

Natural Resources: Federally and State threatened wildlife species do not occur within the site area, while there are plants in that category at the site. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

Historical Resources: Many historical/ cultural resources are being evaluated at the site, but only one is close to being declared a cultural resource. The original DOI and CCC constructed buildings at site camps are currently listed in the National Registry of Historic Places. Any intrusive measures taken at the site will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office and/or other like organizations.

9. **SCHEDULE SUMMARY:** EE/CA

10. **FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY:** For Official Use Only